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18
19 **SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA**
20 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – CENTRAL DISTRICT**
21

22 TINAMARIE BARRALES, on behalf of
23 herself, all others similarly situated, and
24 the general public,

25 Plaintiff,

26 v.

27 QUEST NUTRITION, LLC,

28 Defendant.

Electronically FILED by
Superior Court of California,
County of Los Angeles
3/11/2026 1:48 PM
David W. Slayton,
Executive Officer/Clerk of Court,
By G. Delgado, Deputy Clerk

Case No.: **26STCV07966**

CLASS ACTION

COMPLAINT

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

1 Plaintiff Tinamarie Barrales, on behalf of herself, all others similarly situated, and the
2 general public, by and through her undersigned counsel, brings this action against Quest
3 Nutrition, LLC (“Quest”), and alleges the following upon her own knowledge or, where she
4 lacks personal knowledge, upon information and belief, including the investigation of her
5 counsel.

6 **INTRODUCTION**

7 1. Quest is a ubiquitous brand of protein products, including ready-to-drink
8 protein shakes. At issue in this Complaint are the following Quest Products: **(1) Quest**
9 **Protein Shakes:** “Vanilla,” “Chocolate,” “Salted Caramel,” and “Coffee”; **(2) Quest**
10 **Protein Milkshakes:** “Vanilla,” “Chocolate,” and “Strawberry,” (the “Quest Products”).

11 2. California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified
12 at California Health and Safety Code §§ 25249.5, *et seq.*, (“Prop 65”) and its implementing
13 regulations found at 27 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 25102, *et seq.*, requires businesses, including
14 Quest, to provide a “clear and reasonable warning” before exposing any individual to a
15 chemical “known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity.” Lead is a chemical
16 known to the State of California to cause both cancer and reproductive harm.

17 3. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) has
18 established Maximum Allowable Dose Levels (“MADLs”) for reproductive toxicants,
19 including lead. For lead specifically, the MADL is 0.5 micrograms. *See* 27 Cal. Code Regs.
20 § 25805, Table A. Any exposure¹ at or above this threshold requires a warning.

21 4. The Quest Products contain lead in amounts that expose consumers to at or
22 above the 0.5 microgram safe harbor MADL, but Quest fails to provide the requisite “clear
23 and reasonable warning” to California consumers.

24 5. Plaintiff brings this action against Quest on behalf of herself, similarly-situated
25 Class Members, and the general public to enjoin Quest from failing to warn California
26

27 ¹ For consumer goods, like the Quest Products, “exposure” means the reasonably anticipated
28 rate of intake or exposure for average users of the consumer product, including the “amount
per day” eaten by individuals. *See* 27 Cal. Code Regs. § 25821(a)-(c).

1 consumers with a “clear and reasonable warning” consistent with Prop 65’s requirement, and
2 to recover restitution for injured Class Members.

3 **JURISDICTION & VENUE**

4 6. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over this matter as a result of
5 Quest’s violations of California law, including the California Health & Safety Code and the
6 California Business and Professions Codes.

7 7. This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to Article VI, Section 10 of the California
8 Constitution because this case is not a cause given by statute to other trial courts.

9 8. The aggregate monetary damages and restitution sought herein exceed the
10 minimum jurisdictional limits for the Superior Court and will be established at trial,
11 according to proof.

12 9. The California Superior Court also has jurisdiction in this matter because there
13 is no federal question at issue, as the issues herein are based solely on California statutes and
14 law.

15 10. The Court has personal jurisdiction over Quest because its principal place of
16 business is in California and because it has purposely availed itself of the benefits and
17 privileges of conducting business activities within California.

18 11. Venue is proper in Los Angeles County because a substantial part of the events
19 or omissions giving rise to the class claims occurred in Los Angeles County.

20 **PARTIES**

21 12. Plaintiff Tinamarie Barrales is a citizen of California because she resides in Los
22 Angeles County, California and intends to remain there. On December 31, 2025, Plaintiff
23 sent Quest a Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.6, as required
24 by Prop 65. Quest received such notice on January 5, 2026.

25 13. Defendant Quest is a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business
26 in El Segundo, California. Quest was founded in approximately 2010 and was acquired as a
27 brand by The Simply Good Foods Company in approximately 2019. On information and
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belief, The Simply Good Foods Company is also the parent company of Atkins Nutritionals, Inc. Also on information and belief, Quest operates as a brand and business unit distinct from Atkins Nutritionals, Inc., markets its products under the Quest brand, and does not manufacture, distribute, or sell any product under the Atkins brand.

FACTS

I. The Quest Products Contain Lead in Excess of the Prop 65 Safe Harbor Level

14. Independent laboratory testing conducted in November 2025 by an ISO-accredited laboratory demonstrates that the Quest Products contain lead at levels that expose consumers to more than the 0.5 micrograms (mcg) “safe harbor” MADL.

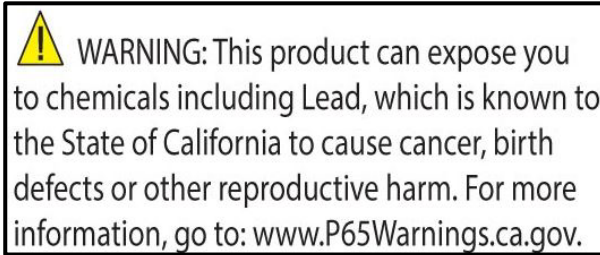
15. These test results are summarized in the table below.

Product	Serving Size ²	Lead (mcg/serv.)	Daily Lead Intake (mcg)	% of Prop 65 Daily Limit
Quest Protein Shake (Vanilla)	1 Bottle (325 mL)	.002	.65	130%
Quest Protein Milkshake (Vanilla)	1 Bottle (414 mL)	.007	2.9	580%

II. Quest Fails to Disclose the Presence of Lead

16. When consumer products, like the Quest Products, contain amounts of lead exceeding the safe harbor MADL, Prop 65 requires the labels to include a “clear and reasonable warning.” As an example: “**WARNING:** This product can expose you to chemicals including Lead, which is known to the State of California to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information, go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.” The warning must include a yellow triangle with a black exclamation point symbol, the name of at least one listed chemical (in this case, lead), a description of the health risk (cancer, reproductive harm, or both), and a reference to the official Prop 65 website. This would look, for example, as follows:

² The lead-per-serving figure alleged is conservative: consumers who ingest larger serving sizes, or multiple servings per day, according to Quest’s instructions, would be exposed to proportionately higher levels of lead, as reflected in the “Daily Lead Intake” column.



17. Despite each containing lead in excess of the MADL, none of the Quest Products bear such a warning.

III. Plaintiff's Purchase, Reliance, and Injury

18. Plaintiff Tinamarie Barrales purchased Quest Vanilla Protein Milkshakes during the Class Period, starting in approximately 2023, with her last purchase in approximately September 2025. Plaintiff often made her purchases from retail stores, including for example Target in South Gate, California.

19. In purchasing the Quest Products, Plaintiff read and relied on the labels, including the absence of a Prop 65 compliant warning that they contained lead.

20. Because Quest failed to warn consumers, as it was required to do under California law, Plaintiff had no reason to believe the Quest Products, when consumed as directed, would expose her to lead at levels that exceed the MADL safe harbor level.

21. Plaintiff would not have purchased any Quest Product or would have paid less for them, if she knew that, when consuming the Quest Products according to the label instructions, she would be exposed to lead at levels that exceed the MADL safe harbor level.

22. Plaintiff would not have purchased any Quest Product, or only would have paid less, if she knew that they were unlawfully labeled in violation of Proposition 65.

23. The Quest Products cost more than similar products without misleading labeling, and would have cost less absent Quest's failure to warn under Prop 65.

24. Through its failure to warn, Quest was also able to gain a greater share of the protein shakes market than it otherwise would have, and to increase the size of the market.

25. Plaintiff paid more for the Quest Products, and would only have been willing

1 to pay less, or unwilling to purchase them at all, if she had known they contained lead levels
2 that exceed the MADL.

3 26. For these reasons, the Quest Products were worthless or at least had less value
4 than what Plaintiff and the Class paid for them.

5 27. Plaintiff and the Class lost money as a result of Quest's omission, *i.e.*, Quest
6 Product labels that omitted the required Prop 65 warning, in that they did not receive what
7 they paid for when purchasing the Quest Products.

8 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

9 28. California Code of Civil Procedure section 382 provides that "when the
10 question is one of a common or general interest, of many persons, or when the parties are
11 numerous, and it is impracticable to bring them all before the court, one or more may sue or
12 defend for the benefit of all."

13 29. Pursuant to Cal. Code Civ. Proc. § 382, Plaintiff seeks certification of a class
14 defined as: All persons who, at any time from four years preceding the date of the filing of
15 this Complaint to the time a class is notified (the "Class Period"), purchased at least one of
16 the Quest Products within the State of California, for personal or household use and not for
17 resale or distribution.

18 30. Excluded from the Class are: (a) Defendant, its officers, directors, and
19 employees; affiliates and affiliates' officers, directors, and employees; (b) Plaintiff's
20 counsel; (c) judicial officers and their immediate family members and associated court staff
21 assigned to this case; and (d) persons or entities who or which timely and properly exclude
22 themselves from the Class.

23 31. Certification of Plaintiff's claims for classwide treatment is appropriate because
24 Plaintiff can prove the elements of her claims on a classwide basis using the same evidence
25 as would be used to prove those elements in an individual action alleging the same claims.

26 32. The members in the proposed Class are so numerous that individual joinder of
27 all members is impracticable, and the disposition of the claims of all Class Members in a
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1 single action will provide substantial benefits to the parties and Court. The Class includes at
2 least thousands of members.

3 33. There is a well-defined community of interest in the common questions of law
4 and fact affecting Class members. The questions of law and fact common to Class members
5 predominate over questions affecting only individual Class members, and include without
6 limitation:

7 a. Whether the Quest Products contain lead at levels that expose consumers
8 to levels above the safe harbor MADL;

9 b. Whether Quest fails to provide a clear and reasonable warning that
10 consuming the Quest Products exposes consumers to levels above the safe harbor
11 MADL;

12 c. Whether Quest violated California law by failing to provide a clear and
13 reasonable Prop 65 warning;

14 d. Whether Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to restitution, disgorgement
15 and/or other equitable and injunctive relief, and the proper scope of relief;

16 e. Whether Plaintiff is entitled to recover civil penalties on behalf of the
17 State of California OEHHA pursuant to Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(b); and

18 f. Whether Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to attorneys' fees, and the
19 proper amount.

20 34. These common questions of law and fact predominate over questions that affect
21 only individual Class Members.

22 35. Plaintiff's claims are typical of Class Members' claims because they are based
23 on the same underlying facts, events, and circumstances relating to Quest's conduct.
24 Specifically, all Class Members, including Plaintiff, were subjected to the same labels that
25 omitted a clear and reasonable Prop 65 warning when they purchased the Quest Products
26 and suffered economic injury as a result. Absent Quest's business practice of deceptively,
27 unlawfully, and unfairly labeling the Quest Products, Plaintiff and other Class Members
28

1 would not have purchased them or would have paid less for them.

2 36. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the
3 Class, has no interests incompatible with the interests of the Class, and has retained counsel
4 competent and experienced in class action litigation, and specifically in litigation involving
5 the false and misleading advertising of foods and beverages.

6 37. Class treatment is superior to other options for resolution of the controversy
7 because the relief sought for each Class Member is small, such that, absent representative
8 litigation, it would be infeasible for Class Members to redress the wrongs done to them.

9 38. Quest has acted on grounds applicable to the Class, thereby making appropriate
10 final injunctive and declaratory relief concerning the Class as a whole.

11 39. As a result of the foregoing, class treatment is appropriate under California
12 Code of Civil Procedure § 382.

13 **CAUSES OF ACTION**

14 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

15 **Violations of the Unfair Competition Law, Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 17200 *et seq.***

16 40. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates the allegations elsewhere in the Complaint
17 as if set forth fully herein.

18 41. The UCL prohibits any “unlawful, unfair or fraudulent business act or practice.”
19 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200.

20 42. The acts, omissions, misrepresentations, practices, and non-disclosures alleged
21 herein constitute business acts and practices.

22 **Unlawful**

23 43. Proposition 65 requires businesses to provide a “clear and reasonable” warning
24 before exposing individuals to chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive harm,
25 including lead, unless an exemption applies.

26 44. Quest sold the Quest Products while exposing consumers to lead without
27 providing the required Proposition 65 warning, and no exemption—including the “safe
28

1 harbor” MADL—applies.

2 45. Quest’s failure to provide a warning as required by Cal. Health & Safety Code
3 § 25249.6 is a violation of law.

4 46. Accordingly, Quest’s acts and omissions constitute an unlawful business
5 practice under the UCL.

6 **Unfair**

7 47. Quest’s conduct with respect to the labeling, advertising, and sale of the Quest
8 Products without the clear and reasonable warnings required by California law was also
9 unfair.

10 48. Quest’s conduct was immoral, unethical, unscrupulous, or substantially
11 injurious to consumers, and the utility of its conduct, if any, did not outweigh the gravity of
12 the harm to its victims.

13 49. Quest’s conduct with respect to the labeling, advertising, and sale of the Quest
14 Products without the requisite warning under Prop 65 was also unfair because it violated
15 public policy as declared by specific constitutional, statutory or regulatory provisions,
16 including but not necessarily limited to California’s Health and Safety Code and the
17 California Code of Regulations.

18 50. Quest’s labeling, advertising, and sale of the Quest Products without the
19 required Prop 65 warning is also unfair because the resulting consumer injury was
20 substantial, not outweighed by any countervailing benefits, and not reasonably avoidable by
21 consumers. Quest profited by concealing the presence of lead at levels exceeding the safe-
22 harbor MADL, while Class Members were deceived into purchasing the Quest Products
23 without the warnings required by law. Consumers could not have reasonably avoided this
24 harm because detecting lead requires laboratory testing, which is an unreasonable burden to
25 place on purchasers. By contrast, Quest could have easily avoided the harm at minimal cost
26 by providing the required warning.

27 * * *

1 51. Quest profited from the sale of the unlawfully and unfairly advertised Quest
2 Products to unwary consumers.

3 52. Quest's conduct caused and continues to cause substantial injury to Plaintiff
4 and other Class Members. Plaintiff has suffered injury in fact as a result of Quest's unlawful
5 conduct.

6 53. Plaintiff and Class Members are likely to continue to be damaged by Quest's
7 deceptive trade practices, because Quest continues to sell the Quest Products without the
8 warning required by Prop 65. Thus, injunctive relief enjoining Quest's practices is proper. In
9 accordance with Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17203, Plaintiff seeks an order enjoining Quest
10 from continuing to conduct business through unlawful and unfair acts and practices.

11 54. Plaintiff and the Class also seek an order for the restitution of all monies from
12 the sale of the Quest Products, which were unjustly acquired through acts of unlawful
13 competition.

14 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

15 **Violations of California Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.5 *et seq.* (Prop 65)**

16 55. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates the allegations elsewhere in the Complaint
17 as if set forth fully herein.

18 56. The Citizens of California have expressly stated in the Safe Drinking Water and
19 Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.5, *et seq.*, that
20 they must be informed "about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or
21 other reproductive harm." Ballot Pamp., Gen. Elec. (Nov. 4, 1986) text of Prop. 65, § 1(b),
22 p. 53.

23 57. On December 31, 2025, Plaintiff provided Quest a 60-Day Notice of Intent to
24 Sue, alerting Quest and the State of California of Quest's violations of Prop 65, which Quest
25 did not rectify within 60 days, or any time, thereafter.

1 58. After receipt of Plaintiff's 60-Day Notice, the appropriate public enforcement
2 agencies have not commenced and diligently prosecuted a cause of action against Quest
3 under Prop 65 regarding the lead content of the Quest Products as alleged herein.

4 59. Quest has engaged in the manufacture, distribution, selling, marketing or
5 offering of the Quest Products for sale or use in violation of Cal. Health & Safety Code §
6 25249.6, and this has continued to occur beyond Quest's receipt of Plaintiff's 60-Day Notice.
7 Such violations are likely to continue to occur in the future.

8 60. Quest knew or should have known, that the Quest Products manufactured,
9 distributed, sold, marketed and offered in the State of California expose individuals to lead
10 at or above the MADL when consumed according to the instructed use. As a result, Quest
11 knew, or should have known, that the typical and reasonably foreseeable use of the Quest
12 Products has caused and continues to cause exposure to lead in amounts at or above the
13 MADL.

14 61. Despite this knowledge, Quest failed to provide a clear and reasonable warning
15 to consumers of the lead exposure caused by the Quest Products.

16 62. Continuing commission by Quest of the acts alleged herein has harmed and will
17 continue to irreparably harm the citizens of the State of California, for which harm they have
18 no plain, speedy, or adequate remedy at law.

19 63. By the above-described acts, Quest is liable, pursuant to Cal. Health & Safety
20 Code § 25249.7(b), for a civil penalty for each unlawful exposure to the lead from the Quest
21 Products.

22 64. Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(a) further authorizes the Court to grant
23 injunctive relief against Quest as a consequence of the above-described acts.

24 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

25 65. Wherefore, Plaintiff, on behalf of herself, all others similarly situated, and the
26 general public, prays for judgment against Quest as to each and every cause of action, and
27 the following remedies:
28

- 1 a. An Order declaring this action to be a proper class action, appointing
2 Plaintiff as Class Representative, and appointing Plaintiff's counsel as Class Counsel;
- 3 b. An Order requiring Quest to bear the cost of Class notice;
- 4 c. An Order compelling Quest to destroy all misleading and deceptive
5 advertising materials and product labels, and to recall all offending products;
- 6 d. An Order requiring Quest to disgorge all monies, revenues, and profits
7 obtained by means of any wrongful act or practice;
- 8 e. An Order requiring Quest to pay restitution to restore all funds acquired
9 by means of any act or practice declared by this Court to be an unlawful, unfair, or
10 fraudulent business act or practice, or untrue or misleading advertising, plus pre-and
11 post-judgment interest thereon;
- 12 f. An Order assessing civil penalties pursuant to Cal. Health & Safety Code
13 § 25249.7(b), against Quest for each violation alleged herein;
- 14 g. An Order, pursuant to Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(a) and/or the
15 UCL, enjoining Quest from distributing or selling the Quest Products in California
16 unless and until Quest brings the Quest Products into compliance with Proposition 65;
- 17 h. An award of attorneys' fees and costs; and
- 18 i. Any other and further relief that Court deems necessary, just, or proper.

19 **JURY DEMAND**

20 66. Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

21
22 Dated: March 11, 2026

/s/ Trevor Flynn

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